

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 NEAE-00 OES-07 /026 W
-----071169 211408Z /53

O P 211307Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 507

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1675

USDOC FOR ITA/BED/CAGNE

DEPT. FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BDIS, KU
SUBJECT: KUWAIT DESALTING PLANT: REQUEST TO EXPEDITE SPARE
PARTS TO EASE "WATER CRISIS"

REF: (A) 77 USDOC 23779, (B) 77 KUWAIT 6869

1. SUMMARY. KUWAIT, WHICH DEPENDS ON DESALINATION PLANTS FOR OVER 95 PERCENT OF ITS FRESH WATER, IS SUFFERING FROM A "WATER CRISIS" BECAUSE OF SHUTTING DOWN OF A NUMBER OF UNITS OF THESE PLANTS. MANY EMBASSY APARTMENTS ARE WITHOUT WATER AND THERE ARE LONG LINES OF RESIDENTS QUEUING FOR TRUCKED WATER. PART OF PROBLEM APPEARS TO BE DUE TO INABILITY OF AMERICAN FIRM, WESTERN GEAR CORP., TO PROVIDE BADLY NEEDED SPARE PARTS IN A TIMELY FASHION. USDOC REQUESTED TO CONTACT WESTERN GEAR URGENTLY TO EXPEDITE PROVISION OF THESE SPARE PARTS. END SUMMARY.

2. KUWAIT RELIES FOR NEARLY ALL ITS FRESH WATER ON DESALINATION PLANTS AT SHUWAIKH (NEAR KUWAIT'S PORT) AND SHUAIBA (SOUTH OF KUWAIT), WHICH AT THE END OF 1976 HAD INSTALLED CAPACITY OF 62 MILLION IMPERIAL GALLONS PER
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DAY. MAXIMUM DAILY CONSUMPTION OF FRESH WATER IN 1976 WAS 51.6 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY; NORMALLY CONSUMPTION LEVELS ARE BELOW 50 MILLION GALLONS A DAY. IN ORDER TO SATISFY PEAK LOAD DEMAND IN THE HOT SUMMER MONTHS, THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND WATER (MEW) MUST SHUT OFF VARIOUS UNITS OF THESE DESALINATION PLANTS DURING THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER THROUGH APRIL TO PERFORM ANNUAL MAINTENANCE, THEREBY

CUTTING CAPACITY CONSIDERABLY. SINCE LAST FALL TWO WESTINGHOUSE--INSTALLED DESALINATION EVAPORATORS WITH A TOTAL CAPACITY OF 4 MILLION GALLONS HAVE BEEN IDLE DUE TO LACK OF REPLACEMENT PARTS WHICH HAD BEEN ORDERED LONG BEFORE FROM THE WESTERN GEAR CORP. (REF B). THIS SITUATION HAS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE MEW TO SHUT OFF OTHER UNITS FOR ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND LET TO A WATER CRISIS ON MARCH 18 WHEN, FOR UNEXPLAINED REASONS, DAILY WATER CONSUMPTION REACHED 48.5 MILLION GALLONS. ALTHOUGH MEW HAS NOT MADE A FORMAL REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE EMBASSY, THE CHIEF OF THE SHUWAIKH DESALINATION PLANT HAS INDICATED TO US THAT ANYTHING WE COULD DO TO SPEED UP DELIVERY OF BADLY NEEDED SPARE PARTS BY WESTERN GEAR WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

3. KHALID MISHARI, WESTINGHOUSE'S AGENT IN KUWAIT, HAS TRIED FOR OVER A YEAR TO GET VARIOUS NEEDED SPARE PARTS FROM WESTERN GEAR. HE READILY ADMITS THAT THE MEW HAS NOT STOCKED THE SPARE PARTS IT SHOULD FOR THE WESTINGHOUSE-BUILT FACILITY, WAITING UNTIL PARTS WERE NEEDED BEFORE ORDERING THEM. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVES THAT WESTERN GEAR HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY RESPONSIVE TO HIS REQUESTS FOR SPARES. HE HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE US WITH VOLUMINOUS COPIES OF TELEX EXCHANGES, WHICH HE BELIEVES SUBSTANTIATE HIS OPINION. WE SEE NO REASON TO GO OVER THIS PAST HISTORY BUT DO BELIEVE THAT ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO SPEED UP DELIVERY OF REQUESTED SPARE PARTS

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FROM WESTERN GEAR.

4. MISHARI INDICATED THAT THE FOLLOWING SPARE PARTS WERE THE ONES MOST URGENTLY NEEDED: ITEMS NUMBER 3, 4, 6 AND 21 OF ORDER NO. 11325AF AND PARTS REQUESTED UNDER ORDER 112290F. AS TELEX AND CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGES BETWEEN BATES AND MISHARI ARE QUITE COMPLEX, THERE MAY BE OTHER PARTS NEEDED OVER AND ABOVE THOSE MENTIONED.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: COMMERCE CONTACT MR. JACK BATES, PRODUCTION MANAGER, WESTERN GEAR CORP., POWER TRANSMISSION DIVISION, LINWOOD, CALIF. TEL (213) 638-7821, TELEX 9103--446-704 WGALYNYD USA AND URGE EXPEDITING OF DELIVERY OF ALL PARTS ORDERED FOR KUWAIT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KUWAIT01675
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780124-0353
Format: TEL
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780343/aaaabkka.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a4d360c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 KUWAIT 6869
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3258299
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KUWAIT DESALTING PLANT: REQUEST TO EXPEDITE SPARE PARTS TO EASE \"WATER CRISIS\"
TAGS: BDIS, KU
To: COM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a4d360c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014